(a) whether a special group was set up by Government to bring about reforms in the power;

(b) if so, the salient features of the recommendations made by the special group;

(c) whether Government have examined those recommendations;

(d) if so, the reaction of Government thereto; and

(e) the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (e) The National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) was engaged as a consultant to suggest the legislative changes required for accelerating the reforms process in the power sector in the country. The NCAER has submitted draft Electricity Bill, 2000 to replace the existing three Electricity Laws (The Indian Electricity Act, 1910), The Electricity (Supply) Act, 1948 and the Electricity Regulatory Commissions Act, 1998).

The draft Bill suggests corporatisation of all the State Electricity Boards and their restructuring into separate entities that would provide for accountability based on profit centres, whether public or private; and setting up/ reinforcing the Regulatory Commissions on the lines of the Electricity Regulatory Commission Act, 1998. It stresses the need for efficiency and competition with the objective of providing reliable power supply to all consumers at competitive prices. It also provides for a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities.

The draft Bill has been circulated to all concerned including the State Governments for their comments. Detailed discussions have been held with States, State Electricity Boards, Regulatory Commission, Experts, Chambers of Commerce and Private Utilities. The revised draft prepared by the NCAER in the light of the discussions and comments, is under consideration of the Government of India.

NTPC dues towards railways

5584. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Badarpur Thermal Power Station of NTPC owes crores of rupees to the Railways for the cost of transporting coal;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the total amount paid by BTPS/NTPC to the Railway during the last three years, year-wise;

(d) the reasons for not paying full amount to Railways; and

(e) by when all the payments are likely to be cleared by NTPC/BTPS?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b) Badarpur Thermal Power Station (BTPS) owes Rs. 980.60 crores as on 31st March, 2000 to Railways for transporting coal. The details of these dues are as under:—

Upto December, 1996	Rs. 733.25 crores
January, 1997 to March, 1998	Rs. 90.56 crores
April, 1998 to March, 1998	Rs. 141.83 crores
April, 1999 to March, 2000	Rs. 14.96 crores

(c) The details of amount paid by BTPS to Railways during the last three years are as under:—

1997-98	Rs 274.50 crores
1998-99	Rs 207.00 crores
1999-2000	Rs 359.23 crores

(d) and (e) The entire output of the BTPS is being supplied to Delhi Vidyut Board and BTPS have to meet their entire expenses including cost and freight of coal from energy bills realised from DVB. The DVB has been defaulting continuously in payment of energy bills to BTPS. As on 31st March, 2000, DVB owes Rs 8061.11 crores (including surcharge of Rs. 4911.36 crores) to BTPS. Consequently, BTPS has not been able to pay the freight bills of Railways in full. As soon as DVB is able to clear the outstandings of BTPS, it would, in turn be able to clear the dues of Railways. However, BTPS is making payment of current freight bills of Railways in full.

White Paper on functioning of DVB

5585. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are persistant demand to issue a White Paper on the functioning of DVB;

(b) if so, whether in view of failure of DVB to generate, distribute or the check theft cases, the Central Government propose to takeover the same; and